

on the ground. Wellington did not allow our grenadiers time to recover themselves. He attacked them in flank with his cavalry, and compelled them to retire in the greatest disorder. At the same instant the 30,000 Prussians under Zieten, who had been taken for Grouchy's army, carried by assault the village of La Haye, and drove our men before them. Our cavalry, our infantry, already staggered by the defeat of the Middle Guard, were afraid of being cut off, and precipitately retreated. The English horse, skilfully availing themselves of the confusion which this unexpected retreat had occasioned, pierced through our ranks, and succeeded in spreading disorder and dismay amongst them. The other troops on the right, who continued to resist with great difficulty the attack of the Prussians, and who had been in want of ammunition above an hour, seeing some of our squadrons routed and some of the Guards running away, thought all was lost, and quitted their position. This panic extended in an instant to our left, and the whole army, after having so valiantly carried the enemy's strongest posts, abandoned them with as much precipitation as they had displayed bravery in conquering them.

The English army, which had advanced in proportion as we retreated, and the Prussians, who had not ceased to pursue us, fell at once on our scattered battalions; night increased the tumult and alarm, and soon the whole army was nothing but a confused crowd, which the English and Prussians routed without effort, and pitilessly massacred.

The Emperor, witnessing this frightful defection, could scarcely believe his eyes. His *aides de camp* flew to rally the troops in all directions. He also threw himself into the midst of the crowd. But his words, his orders, his entreaties were not heard. How was it possible for the army to form anew under the guns and amid the continual charges of 80,000 English and 60,000 Prussians, who covered the field of battle ?

However, eight battalions, which the Emperor had previously collected, formed in squares, and blocked up the road to prevent the advance of the Prussian and English armies. These brave fellows, notwithstanding their resolution and courage, could not long resist the efforts of an enemy twenty times their number. Surrounded, assaulted, cannonaded on all sides, most of them at length fell. Some sold their lives dearly; others, exhausted with fatigue, hunger, and thirst, had no longer strength to fight, and suffered themselves to be killed without being able to make any defence. Two battalions only, whom the enemy were unable to break, retreated disputing the ground, till, thrown into disorder and hurried along by the general movement, they were obliged themselves to follow the stream.

One last battalion of reserve, the illustrious and unfortunate remains of the granite column of the fields of Marengo, had remained unshaken amid the tumultuous waves of the army. The Emperor retired into the ranks of these brave fellows, still commanded by Cambronne ! He formed them into a square, and advanced at their head to meet the enemy. All his generals, Ney, Soult, Bertrand, Drouot, Corbineau, De